MINUTES

OF THE

TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

NORTH RIVER

UNITED BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

CONVENED AT

SHEPHERD CHURCH,

FAYETTE COUNTY, ALABAMA,

FROM 25TH TO 29TH SEPT. 1846.

TUSKALOOSA:
PRINTED BY M. D. J. SLADE.
1846.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1846.

1. The Anniversary Sermon was delivered according to previous appointment, by Elder B. B. Smith, from the 1st verse of the 12th chapter of Paul's letter to the Hebrews.

2. After a recess of thirty minutes, the Delegates assembled in the meeting-house for business. Singing, and prayer by Elder David W. Andrews.

3. Read the letters from Corresponding Churches, and enrolled the names of the Delegates.

4. Re-elected Elder DAVID W. ANEREWS, Moderator, and THOMAS M. GABBERT, Clerk.

5. An invitation was extended to Churches desirous of uniting with this body. The Camp Spring Church, Fayette county, newly constituted, presented a letter praying admission, which was received, and the right hand of fellowship extended her Delegates, (Hiram Smith and Miles Rainwater,) by the Moderator.

6. Appointed the following committees: 1st. On Arrangement—Elders B. B. Smith, Jesse Walden, Tilmon Howel, and brethren Willis Richards and John Yerby, with the Moderator and Clerk. 2d. To arrange Preaching—brethren Isaac Shepherd, John Savage, Eleaney Ward, Michael Shepherd, and Alson Catledge. 3d. On Finance—brethren John Savage and John Yerby.

7. After singing, and prayer by Elder Thomas M. Gabbert, adjourned until to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1846.

8. Met pursuant to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

9. Called the names of the Delegates, and marked absentees.

10. Called for the Report of the committee of Arrangement, which was received, and the committee discharged.

11. Read the Constitution and Rules of Decorum.

12. The Association then agreed to attach to our present Minutes, a Circular, as contained in the Minutes of the Chickasaw Association, for our Circular.

13. Appointed the next annual Association of this body to be held with Zion Church, to commence on Friday before the Fourth Sabbath in September, 1847. And that Elder Jesse Walden be appointed to preach the anniversary Sermon, and Elder David W .Andrews his alternate.

14. Appointed Elder David W. Andrews to preach a Missionary Sermon, on Sabbath of our next Association, and Elder B. B. Smith his alternate; also to take up a public collection for the purpose of Domestic Missions.

15. The Association then agreed to appoint three District Meetings. The first to be held with Liberty Church, to commence on Friday before the 4th Sabbath in July, 1847; Elder Jesse Walden to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder B. B. Smith his alternate. The second, to be held with Pilgrim's Rest Church, to commence on Friday before the fifth Sabbath in August, 1847; Elder Tilmon Howel to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder Josiah Winter his alternate. The third, to be held with Pleasant Grove Church, to commence on Friday before the second Sabbath in September, 1847; Elder Thomas M. Gabbert to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder Abner Files his alternate.

16. Took up the case of our Home Mission. Agreed to appoint a committee composed of Elders B. B. Smith, Tilmon Howel, Jesse Walden, and brethren Willis Richards and Michael Shepherd, with the Moderator and Clerk, to revise our plan of Missionary operations.

17. After a recess of one hour, the Association met, and called for the Report of the above committee. Received, and the committe discharged.

18. *Resolved*, That the Association recommend to the old executive committees to

make all the collections on their old subscriptions they can, and pay over to the Treasurer, that the old arrearages be paid off. Also so appoint another Executive committee, and that they be instructed to take up all the collections they can by Saturday before the first Sabbath in March, 1847, at which time they are requested to meet at Union Church for business.

19. After singing, and prayer by Elder Abner Files, adjourned until Monday morning, 10 o'clock.

SABBATH—September 27, 1846.

Elder Tilmon Howel, who was appointed by our last Association to preach a Missionary Sermon, delivered an appropriate discourse from the 10th ch. of Paul's letter to the Hebrews, and from the first to the tenth verses inclusive. After which took up the sum of $12 30 by public collection.

Monday, Sept. 28, 1846.

20. Met pursuant to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

21. Appointed an Executive committee composed of brethren Richard Files, David A. Collins. Absalom Deason, Ambrose Dollar; William A. Edmonds, Dennis Davis, Reuben Keton, Lewis Harbin, William Davis, John Savage, Jacob Black, Allen Wallis, Green T. Hartin, Miles Rainwater, Hutson Butler, James M. Ray, William Johnson, Robert Bowlan, to keep in operation our Home Mission.

22. Called for the Report of the committee on Finance, which was as follows: For printing Minutes, $20 69; other purposes, $9 78.

23. *Resolved*, That this Association petition the Chickasaw and Aberdeen Associations for a correspondence, and that Elders David W. Andrews and Tilmon Howel be appointed corresponding messengers to the Chickasaw, and Elder B. B. Smith to write the corresponding letter; and that Elders B. B. Smith, Jesse Walden, and brother Willis Richards be appointed corresponding messengers to the Aberdeen, and Elder Tilmon Howel to write the corresponding letter.

24. *Resolved*, That the 4th Article of our Constitution read thus—The Association thus formed shall choose by ballot a Moderator and Clerk, who shall serve one year.

25. *Resolsed*, That this Association have 550 copies of these Minutes printed, and that brother John Yerby and the brother Clerk superintend the printing of them.

26. Appointed the following brethren Distributing Agents: 1st District, John Yerby; 2d District, Tilmon Howel; 3d District, Jesse Walden; 4th District, John H. Ray.

27. Adjourned until to-morrow morning, 8 o'clock.

Tuesday, September 29, 1846.

28. Met pursuant to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by Elder Howel.

28. *Resolved*, That this Association vote $20 for printing Minutes.

30. *Resolved*. That the brother Clerk have $10 for his services.

31. We as Delegates of the North River United Baptist Association, beholding as we do the blighting and withering influence of spirituous liquors, as they are now used in our country, and especially by the members of the Church of God:

Reeolved, That we disapprobate in our preachers, deacons and members, the God-dishonoring practice of distilling or dealing in ardent spirits for gain; and further, we disapprobate dram drinking in every form, except when recommended by a physician in case of sickness; and further, we do most seriously, in the presence of Almighty God, pledge oursalves in a covenant, by giving each other our hand to abstain entirely from the use of ardent spirits, as above prescribed.

Resolved, That we advise the Churches in our union to do likewise.

32. *Resolved*, That our sincere thanks are due the brethren and friends of this vicinity, for the kind and hospitable entertainment afforded us during our meeting, and the same is hereby tendered.

33. After singing, and prayer by Elder B. B. Smith, adjourned to the time and place of our next appointment.

Tho. M. Gabbert, Clerk. DAVID W. ANDREWS, Moderator.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

NORTH RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION—DELEGATES—STATISTICS.

Districts.	Churches & Counties	Names of ordained ministers in SMALL CAPITALS. Absentees* Names of Licentiates in *Italics.* DELEGATES.	Baptised,	Rec. by Let.	Secession,	Restored,	Dismissed,	Excluded,	Dead,	Total in Fel.	Contribution for Minutes.	Contribution for Associ'n.	
1st District	Bethlehem, Tuskal'a	L Lee, ABNER FILES, T M GABBERT,	7	...	...	1	...	..	...	40	1 00	1 00	1
	Salem, do	B B SMITH, W Richards, D A Collins	3	5	...	...	3	2	2	108	2 00	.....	3
	Liberty, do	John Yerby, A Deason, Joel Rushin	8	4	1	...	4	1	...	30	1 50	50	4
	Columbia, do	Not represented.											1
	Macedonia, do	Amb. Dollar, L Sherly, *A Lawrence*	9	4	1	...	..	6	..	44	1 00	50	4
	Hepsebeth, Fayette,	T HOWEL, S Apling, W A Edwards	...	8	...	...	5	..	..	16	1 00	40	1
	Mt. Joy, do	A Files sr. L HARBIN, W P Earnest,	1	...	...	..	1	1	1	24	75	63	2
	New Hope, Walker,	D. Davis, Rob't Mounts, Jer. Files*	...	..	...	..	..	5	1	28	50	50	3
	Pleasant Grove do	Reuben Keten, Wm Keten, M Orear	3	2	...	..	..	1	...	30	1 00	1 00	2
	Ebenezer, do	Wm Davis, Ch R Key, W Swindle*	1	3	...	..	..	...	...	15	75	56	4
	Enon, Tuskaloosa,	Not represented.									50	.....	3
2d District	Shepherd, Fayette,	I. Shepherd, M Shepherd, J Savage	23	15	3	..	1	..	...	136	2 50	77	2
	Union, do	J Black, John J Long, *G. Trawick,*	6	..	...	...	11	4	...	70	1 00	50	1
	Mt. Pleasant, do	*J Lindley,* Allen Wallis, J. WINTER	13	5	3	...	15	2	...	36	69	.....	3
	Pilgrim's Rest, do	JESSE WALDEN, A Catledge, L Crow	8	2	...	...	8	..	1	48	1 00	90	4
	Camp Spring, do	H Smith, M. Rainwater, M. Gwin,*	...	...	...	...	..	..	...	20	1 50	50	
	New Prospect, Miss	D W ANDREWS, G West, T Andrews	5	10	1	...	2	1	..	23	1 00	50	2
	Bethel, Monroe do	Isaac Black, Jas M Ray, E. Pickel*	1	...	1	..	1	...	..	25	1 00	.....	2
	Shady Grove, Marion	Jas Neale, A. Gogins,* E. G Terrell	1	3	2	..	...	...	..	21	1 00	1 00	1
3d Dist't	Zion, do	R. Bowlan, A. Markham, T W McGowin,	25	3	5	1	3	3	...	75	1 00	52	4
4th Dist't			114	63	17	2	54	26	5	789	20:69	9 78	

RULES OF DECORUM.

Rule 1. The Association shall be opened and closed with prayer.

Rule 2. But one person shall speak at a time, and he shall rise and address the Moderator.

Rule 3. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he departs from the subject in question, or uses words of a personal reflection.

Rule 4. Every motion made and seconded, shall come under the consideration of the Association, except withdrawn by him who made it.

Rule 5. Every case taken up by the Association shall first be decided, or withdrawn before another is offered.

Rule 6. When any question is taken up by the Association, after allowing time for debate, the Moderator shall take the question by yeas and nays, or otherwise. The decision thus made shall be announced by the Moderator immediately.

Rule 7. No person shall depart from the service of the Association without leave of the Moderator.

Rule 8. No person shall speak more than twice on the same subject, without leave obtained.

Rule 9. The appellation of brother shall be used in our addresses one to another.

Rule 10. The Moderator shall be entitled to the same privileges as any other member, provided he appoints some other member to fill his seat, while speaking or otherwise, but shall not vote unless the Association be equally divided.

Rule 11. Any member violating the above rules, may be reproved, as the Moderator may think proper, only on the same day the offence shall have occurred.

FROM THE BAPTIST REGISTER.

A CANDID INQUIRY.

WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DIVIDING CHRISTIANS AT THE LORD'S TABLE?

To every Christian unto whom this may come.

Beloved in the Lord.—It is obvious to every observer, that there exists an obstacle in the way of the free communion of all the disciples of Jesus Christ at the Lord's table, and as it has been laid to our charge, as Baptists, that we have shut the door and put up bars against our brethren of other denominations, it will be our object in this communication to consider, on whom rests the responsibility of dividing Christains at the Lord's table. We shall not here argue, what our brethren themselves hold to, in common with us, that is, that Baptism is a pre-requisite to a church relation and communion at the Lord's table. But a very few can be found, who will advocate the practice of joining the church previous to Baptism, or of celebrating the Lord's supper, unbaptised, and without a church relation.

Let a single reference to the Bible on this subject suffice. The order observed by Peter on the day of Pentecost was this, as found in Acts 2d, from the 37th to the 42d, inclusive. Sinners were deeply impressed with a sense of their guilt and danger, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

You will see by the 41st verse, that they gladly received the word, were baptised, and added to the church, and then it is said, "They continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." This is the order of coming to the Lord's table, as observed by Peter and the primitive churches of Christ.

1. Let us inquire on whom rests the responsibility of seperating Christians at the Lord's table, the Bible being our judge.

We have already quoted one portion of the scripture showing the steps to be taken in coming to the Lord's table, as set forth on that memorable day of Pentecost.

1. To be convinced of sin.
2. To repent.
3. To be baptised.
4. To be added to the church, and to continue in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship.
5. To attend to the breaking of bread, or the Lord's supper.

The Holy Ghost directed in thus coming to the Lord's table, as Peter and the rest of the Apostles were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and acted and spake under his controlling influence. In no previous or subsequent period has the Holy Ghost in the least degree changed this order of coming to the Lord's table. This is the order by which we are governed, and these the steps we take ourselves, and teach others to take, in coming to the table of our Lord. As to the proper subjects of baptism, the bible has plainly informed us. Those who have repented of their sins, and exercised faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are the only proper subjects of baptism. Peter said, "Repent and be baptised." Our Savior in his commission to his Apostles, says, 'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.' No christian will deny the truth, that men were commanded by the Apostles to believe, and they did believe, and were baptised.

We dare not deviate from this rule laid down in the scriptures, and administer the ordinance to unbelievers and unconscious babes. The chapter and verse authorizing such a deviation has never been found. And as to the question, what is baptism? Let the bible answer for itself. Mark i. 9, 10: "Jesus came from Nazereth of Gallilee, and was baptised of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens open and the spirit like a dove descending upon him."—John iii 23: "And John also was baptising in Enon, near to Salem, because there was much water there." Acts viii. 38, 39: "And they went down both into the water,

both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptised him. And when they were come up out of the water the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more." Rom. vi. 3d to 5th, inclusive. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his ressurrection. Col. ii. 12: "Buried with him (that is with Christ,) in babtism, wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead." Thus the scripture furnishes us with unequivocal evidence that the immersion of a true believer in Christ, in water, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is the baptism commanded by the great head of the Church. What can be made of this testimony short of immersion? We are told in the bible that they went down into the water, that they were buried with Christ by baptism, buried with him in baptism, that they were planted together in the likeness of his death; Also they came up out of the water.

We have this plain rule laid down before us in God's word, and its exemplification by Peter on the day of Pentecost, that is, that sinners should repent, believe in Christ Jesus, be baptised, (immersed in water,) unite with the church, and then attend to the Lord's supper. We are happy in the consideration that this order of coming to the Lord's table commends itself to the consciences of christians of all denominations as being right in the sight of God. We take the Gospel rule, and we follow that rule till we sit down with the church of Christ, to celebrate the sufferings and death of our Savior. Our brethren of the Methodist, Congregational and Free Will Baptist denominations, acknowledge that the rule we follow is according to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Under this concession on their part, on whom does the responsibility of seperating christains at the Lord's table rest? If they say that we do it according to God's word, they concede that the very step we take in coming to the Lord's table is found in the gospel of Christ. And if our following strictly the rule that Christ has laid down, occasions a division of christians at the Lord's table, we are not at all answerable for that, because we had no hand in making the rule; and if they are troubled on this account, they must settle that with Jesus Christ at the day of judgment. For they confess that he made the rule, and all the fault they can find in us about it is, that we so undeviatingly follow that rule. Such a fault we cannot expect that Jesus Christ will bring up at the day of judgment, that any disciple has been too strict and rigid in following the commands as delivered by the great head of the church.

Upon a fair investigation, the responsibility of seperating christains at the Lords table will be found to rest on others, not the Baptists. For instance, Peter and James, John and Andrew, start on a journey for the town of Union. They set out in the same road, but are told that there are roads on some distance ahead, that turn off from the one that they are now in. They are further told, that the straight and open road will surely lead them to Union. Every body tells them that the straight road is a sure road, and some tell them that the other roads will lead them to Union just as well as the straight forward road; and many tell them that these by-roads will lead so far away from Union, that they never can hope to arrive at the place of their inquiry unless they keep the straight road. At length our travellers arrive at the different roads, and here hold a consultation. Peter inquires if they are not satisfid that the fair, straight road is the sure road to Union. They are all agreed that it is. Peter is very desirous of their company, and urges them to go with him in the straight road, assuring them that he cannot consistently with his views of duty take any other.—Here then they stand, all convinced that Peter's road is at least as good as any other road, but after all, James says, he is determined to turn out on one side, and John says he will turn out on the other. Andrew is very sorrow to leave Peter but loves James and John, and soon turns aside. Our travellers progress in their journey, and soon high walls and fences seperate them from each other. There is no difficulty in this case in seeing at once on whom rests the responsibility of seperating these

friends. It rests upon James, John and Andrew. They were all just as well satisfied as to the correctness of Peter's road, as Peter was himself. They could without a sacrifice have gone with Peter, but it was not consistent for him to go with them. And what would you now think, to hear them laying their division to Peter, and the high walls that seperated them, to his charge?

This is a fair representation of our case as to the other denominations. They are perfectly satisfied, that the road we take to come to the Lord's table, is a straight and sure road to that ordinance, a road fully authorized by Jesus Christ.

In as much as all christians are satisfied, that one way is right and the Baptists have taken that right way, whatever division there may be of Christians at the Lord's table, the responsibility of that division cannot rest on those who are acknowledged to be right, but on those who turn out into the roads of at least a doubtful character. But our brethren of other denominations say, there are other ways to come to the Lord's supper just as good as that observed by the Baptists. But the scriptures of divine truth and the Holy Ghost lead every person the same way, as to the subject and ordinance of baptism. Jesus Christ in his commission to his Apostles, says, Mat. xxviii. 18, 20: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, (that is, disciple all nations,) baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—— Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Has Jesus Christ commanded Peter to go down into the water and to bury, to plant those who are true disciples, in the above sacred name, and thus introduce them into the church, and to the Lord's supper? All christians admit, that while Peter is thus engaged, he is obeying the command of Jesus Christ.

Then we ask again: Does Christ command James to sprinkle infants and unbelievers, and call this baptism; and when they believe, introduce them into the church and to the Lord's table? Does he command John to sprinkle infants and unbelievers, and pour water upon some that believe, and plunge others that believe, and call it all baptism, and thus introduce members into the church and to the Lord's table? Is the command of Christ thus divided? And does it thus vary to suit the consciences and wishes of all sorts of professors? One fact is evident, if Christ's command is thus divided, the responsibility of dividing his people must rest on the division of his own command. But we can never consent that the command of Christ is at all divided. When he commands his ministers to baptize, and a believer in him to be baptized, there is one definite thing to be done, (i. e.) to go down into the water to be buried, to be planted there, and to come up out of the water. The chapter and verse never has and never can be found in the Bible showing the command for any thing else to be done for baptism, or showing a command to administer this ordinance to any except believers in Jesus Christ——Eph. iv, 5—"One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Dr. Woods, of Andover, Mass., in a treatise on infant baptism says, p. 19: "The argument on which we rest, is derived from the reasonableness of the thing; from the uniform practice of the early churches as set forth in ecclesiastical history; and from what appears implied in scripture accounts." The Doctor is eminent for his learning and piety; and writing on the subject that he has, if a command or example could be found in the Bible for infant sprinkling, he would have found it, and made that the ground of his argument. But as he has produced no such command or example, he virtually acknowledges that those who sprinkle infants for baptism, do it without any command or example in the Bible. All that his argument has to do with the Bible, is with "what appears to be implied in scripture accounts." It seems to us that this can be no authority at all; whereas very different things may appear to be implied in scripture accounts to different persons. As some recent attempts have been made to prove that infant baptism may be performed by pouring, referring to the instance of God's pouring out his Spirit, we observe that it was not the pouring that was baptism, but it was the immersion in the Spirit, which was poured out till the room was filled, and all those were filled that were in the room, with the Holy Ghost. Water might be poured or even sprinkled into a room so as to overwhelm persons in the room, but in this case the sprinkling and pouring are not

the baptism—the overwhelming of the water is the baptism. And this is as near as sprinkling or pouring ever come to baptism.

II. Let us inquire, on whom rests the respensibility of dividing Christians at the Lord's table, consulting the consciences of christians ?

To make this subject plain, we will suppose that Peter, James, John and Andrew are four young converts, and belong to four different congregations. They are happy in each other's society, in the conference meeting, and in the praying circle—they rejoice together, and feel a great desire that their happy union may continue. At length they feel it a duty to go forward and unite with the church, and attend the Lord's Supper ; they all express a desire to be united and go together. They meet to consult on the subject, to see if they can be agreed. They are at once united in the opinion that they must be baptized as the first step : the next thing is to determine what baptism is. Peter says it is the immersion of a believer in Christ, in water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. James, John and Andrew, all agreed that this is gospel baptism ; and declare that their consciences would be perfectly satisfied with that baptism. You see that there is a way, then, that our friends can go on united and happy, and all do right ; and now mark who it is that makes a division. Peter says, that he understands from the word of God that immersion is the only water baptism, and he cannot conscientiously do any other way, and is happy to find that his brethren are so well satisfied that he is right in his opinion.

But James says, that he belongs to a Congregational meeting, and he can make sprinkling do. He is going next Sabbath to be sprinkled and unite with that church. To this Peter objects, as he cannot go with sprinkling, and as James is equally satisfied with immersion. Peter renews his request that there may be no break in their union. But James is fixed, he is sprinkled, and goes to the Lord's Supper that way. John acknowledges that immersion is gospel baptism, but as he belongs to the Methodist congregation, he intends to have water poured upon him, and make that do for baptism. Peter here plainly tells his brother, that this pouring for baptism will be such a bar in his way that he cannot go with him, and as immersion is equally good in John's opinion, Peter entreats him not to put up this bar. But on the next Sabbath John has water poured upon him in the name of the Trinity, and is received into the Methodist Church.

And Peter and Andrew now remain, and as Andrew belongs to the Free-Will Baptist congregation, they both hold to immersion, and are happy in this agreement. But Andrew says he shall invite James and John to the Lord's table with him. And here Peter lays his case open before Andrew, and states, that these brethren could conscientiously have come with him; but they turned about from him, and put up a bar against him, which effectually shut him out from the Lord's table with them. Furthermore, Peter assures him that he could just as well fellowship the sprinkling of James at the Lord's table in the Congregational church, and the pouring of John in the Methodist church, as to fellowship them at the Lord's table in the Free-Will Baptist church. And after all, Andrew says, we shall invite them to come. Peter is immersed according to his faith, and unites with the Baptist church, and attends to the Lord's Supper there.